HALL AND STAIRCASE OF THE NEW BRITISH MUSEUM.

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THE HALL AND STAIRCASE OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

ABOVE is a representation of part of the Hall, in the British Museum, and the staircase,—one of the most effective portions of the new structure.

The order is Grecian Doric. The ceiling is trabeated and deeply coffered, and is enriched with Greek frets and other ornaments in various colours, painted in encaustic. On the east side are the apartments devoted to the MS. department. On the west is the principal staircase, and a gallery which forms the approach to the collection of antiquities. The centre flight is seventeen feet wide, flanked by two pedestals of grey Aberdeen granite, intended to receive colossal sculpture. The walls on either side of this centre flight are cased with red Aberdeen granite, highly polished. On the first landing are pedestals and carved vases of Huddlestone stone. The balustrades are of the same. The ceiling and walls are painted partly in oil and partly in encaustic colours, the former being trabeated and coffered to correspond with the entrance hall, and similarly decorated.

The polychromatic enrichments have been applied with very considerable success. The sunk panels are blue, with a yellow star in each; the enrichments are variously coloured,—red and white predominating; and the stiles, beams, &c., are covered with frets, guilloche, and scrolls, in flat colours, for all of which precedents were sought in the museum collection. These decorations were executed by Messrs. Collman and Davis.

Our engraving is from a larger drawing by Mr. Collman, which was exhibited some time since.

Knowing that comparatively few of our readers possess the early volume of our journal in which, as mentioned last week, was given a view of the building that occupied the site of the new structure, we have, at the request of several correspondents, reproduced the engraving as an interesting record.

THE HOLLOW BRICK CEILING OVER ST. GEORGE'S HALL, LIVERPOOL.

THE following is the specification for the construction of the ceiling over St. George's Hall, under which the work was executed. It will be found suggestive for other matters:—

1. The contractor must furnish, at his own cost, all labour, mortar, cement, and bond-timber, as hereinafter described.

2. The centres have been put up and the panelling set out, and hollow bricks will be furnished to the contractor on the ground, for the full and complete performance of the work.

3. The contractor is to find all stageing and implements necessary for the execution of the whole work.

4. The mortar must be made from the best Halkin mountain or blue lias lime, fresh burned, composed of one part, by measure, to two parts of perfectly clean-washed fresh-water sand, free from dirt, clay, or saline particles. The character of the sand must be most particularly attended to. The mortar must be well mixed in a steam mortar mill, and must be so made and delivered on the ground as to insure its being used perfectly fresh. On no account must mortar once set be remixed for use on this work.

5. The cement must be the "patent lithic," fresh and good, and mixed, by measure, with an equal proportion of sand, as described for the mortar. The cement must be used immediately it is mixed; softening or re-tempering will not be allowed. All cement once set, before use, must be immediately removed from the work.

6. The arch and spandrils must be formed and bonded according to the plans and sections furnished, and in strict conformity with such instructions as shall from time to time be given during the progress of the work.

7. In setting the bricks, the straightest and truest sides must be chosen for the beds, and the thickest end placed outwards. Where the arch is more than one brick in depth, they must be carefully and truly bonded according to section, and instructions furnished at the time. The bond, in all cases, must be set in cement; and, if required, hoop iron, stone, wood, or flag, is to be used, as shall be directed.

8. The work must be carried on equally, and regularly, in perfect courses on each side of the centres. The spandril walls are to be carried up with the arch.

9. When the arch shall have been raised 10 feet, on each side of the centres, the crown must be regularly and evenly loaded with dry bricks, so as to give the centres their full weight. These bricks will be for use in that portion of the arch to be completed. The bricks must be so stacked as not to injure themselves or the centres, and they must be taken gradually and regularly from thence, and used in the arch, on each side, so as to keep the new work in equal course, and the crown of the centres regularly loaded at the same time.

10. Where the double brick ribs are liable, from their depth, to come into contact with the principals, the rib must be reduced in depth, by bond, to one and a half brick.

11. For 5 feet on each side the horizontal centre line of the arch, the whole work is to be set in the best "Patent Lithic Cement," mixed and used as specified.

12. The whole of the work must be full bedded and jointed throughout the entire area of all the beds and joints, whether mortar or cement be used. The beds and joints must be evenly spread, not less than one-eighth of an inch in thickness, in the thinnest

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